

Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System,  
Plant 4, Worker Cottage  
(Building No. 125)  
Bishop Creek  
Bishop Vicinity  
Inyo County  
California

HAER No. CA-145-4-I

HAER  
CAL  
14-BISH.V,  
5I-

**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

**Historic American Engineering Record  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
San Francisco, California**

## HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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**Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System, Plant 4**  
**Lightning Arrestor Vault, Building 125**  
**Bishop Creek**  
**Bishop Vicinity**  
**Inyo County**  
**California**

**HAER No. CA-145-4-I**

**Location:** Near Bishop Creek in North 1/2 of the Southeast 1/4 of Section 19, Township 7 South, Range 32 East, M.D.M, Inyo County, California (UTM 11/367115/4131690), in the eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains approximately 2.5 miles southwest of the town of Bishop, California, and 225 air miles due north of Los Angeles.

**Date of Construction:** 1907

**Builder:** Nevada-California Power Company

**Present Owner:** Southern California Edison Company  
2244 Walnut Grove Avenue  
Rosemead, CA 91770

**Original Use:** Lightning Arrestor Vault

**Present Use:** Storage Facility

**Significance:** Building 125, Plant 4 (the vault originally containing the Plant 4 lightning arresting equipment), is significant because of its contribution to an understanding of the historic character of the physical environment of the Plant 4 compound and because of its association with the original engineering and construction of the Bishop Creek System. Built in 1905, Plant 4 was the first on the Bishop Creek System, and it remains the system's operating headquarters. The Bishop Creek System is considered significant for its role: (1) in the expansion of hydroelectric generation technology, (2) in the development of eastern California, and (3) in the development of long-distance power transmission and distribution.

**Report Prepared By:** Thomas T. Taylor, Senior Archaeologist  
Southern California Edison Company  
Environmental Affairs Division  
Rosemead, CA 91770

**Date:** July 31, 1997

**Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System, Plant 4  
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**HAER No. CA-145-4-I (Page 2)**

## **1. DESCRIPTION**

Building 125, Plant 4, is a small, 9 x 30 foot one-story reinforced concrete structure built in 1907. Constructed in a simplified Mission Revival Style, building 125 and its immediate southern neighbor, building 109 (photo 145-4-1-1), were erected at the same time in order to house support equipment for the Plant 4 powerhouse (located just south of building 109). The function of building 125 was to house equipment used to reduce threat of damage to the Plant 4 electrical equipment from a lightning strike. It has major alterations from the original condition.

The exterior walls of this rectangular-in-plan building have a stucco finish with only a single opening: a metal door on the northwest end (photo 145-4-1-2). The shed roof appears to be of concrete with a bracketed overhang on the south side (photo 145-4-1-3); the graceful curves of these roof brackets provide the Mission Style detailing. The building has a square sheet-metal roof vent (photo 145-4-1-4). A single 2-light over 2-light, double-hung, wood-framed window pierces the southeast end of the building (photo 145-4-1-5). Wooden storage racks line either side of the long axis of the interior. Interior walls, floor, and ceiling are concrete. Interior illumination is provided by a single overhead fixture.

With removal of the electrical equipment from building 109 (and its conversion to the recreation hall), the lightning arresting equipment housed in building 125 became obsolete and was also removed. At present building 125 is being used as a storeroom for important documents and supplies.

The project area is about five miles southwest of the town of Bishop, Inyo County, California. The Bishop Creek System is primarily located along the south, middle, and north forks of Bishop Creek on the steep eastern slopes of the southern Sierra Nevada Range. Plant 4 is one of five plants sited at varying elevations along Bishop Creek. Situated in the middle of the Bishop Creek System, Plant 4 is northeast of Plants 2 and 3, and southwest of Plants 5 and 6.

**Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System, Plant 4  
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**HAER No. CA-145-4-I (Page 3)**

## **II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Please refer to the "Historical Context" section in the general Historic American Engineering Record for the Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System (HAER No. CA-145) for historical information regarding Bishop Creek Plant 4.

Building 125, the original lightning arrestor vault at Bishop Creek Plant 4, is an integral element of the original landscape of the Plant 4 complex. Related features include the powerhouse, picturesque curving streets, houses sited on terraces with stone retaining walls, manicured front lawns with unified groupings of shade trees, and integrally designed lighting standards.

## **III. SOURCES**

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**Elliott, Russell R.**

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**Intermountain Research**

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**Theodoratus Cultural Research, Inc.**

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**Weitze, Karen J.**

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Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System, Plant 4  
Lightning Arrestor Vault, Building 125  
Bishop Creek  
Bishop Vicinity  
Inyo County  
California

HAER No. CA-145-4-I (Page 4)

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Massachusetts.

#### IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This Historic American Engineering Record documentation of Building 125 (the original lightning arrestor vault), Bishop Creek Plant 4, was undertaken because the building no longer serves its original purpose and has no alternative use. Built in conjunction with adjacent building 109, this structure served to reduce threat of damage to the electrical equipment from a lightning strike. With removal of the electrical equipment from building 109, the lightning arresting equipment housed in building 125 became obsolete and was also removed.

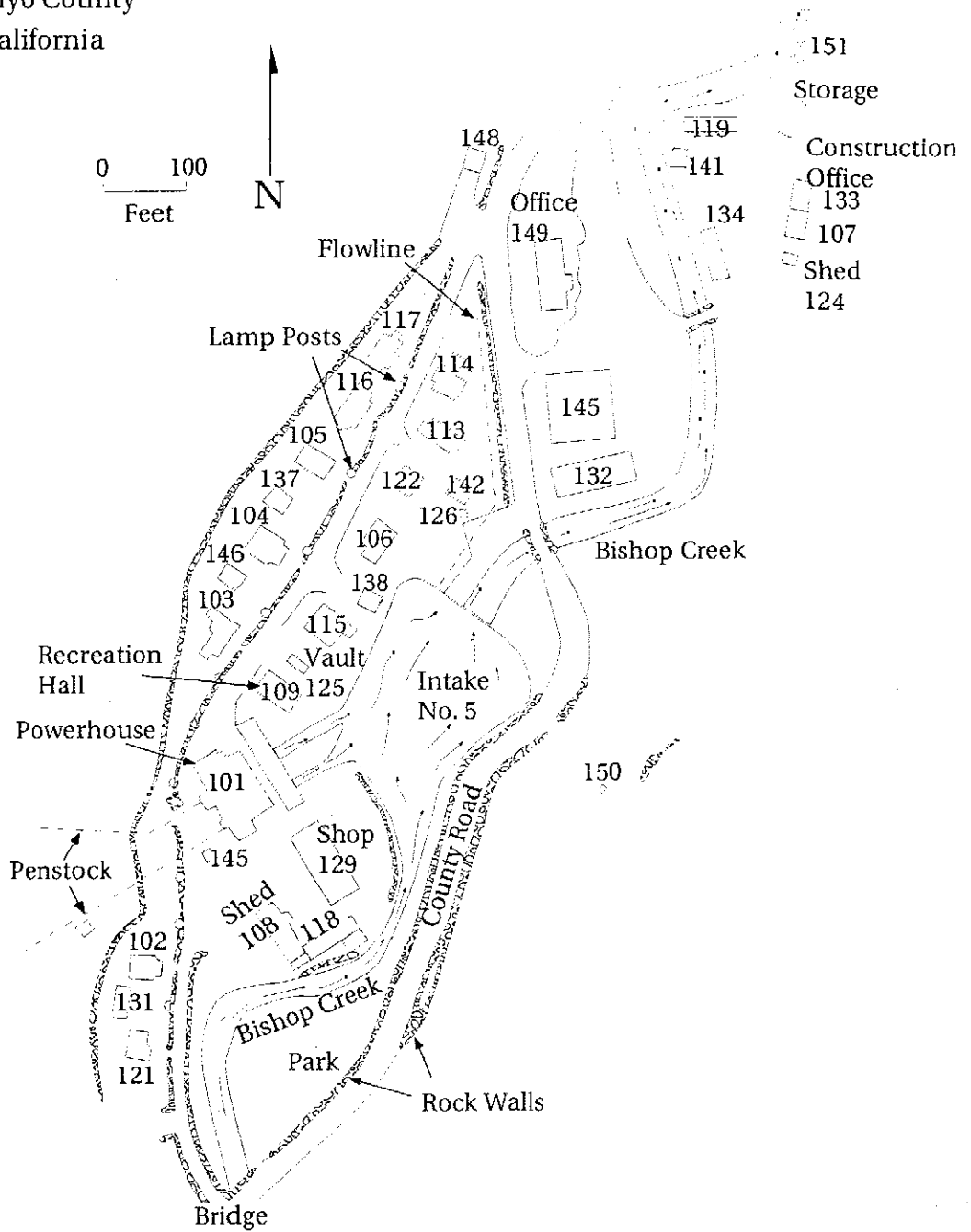
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Bishop Creek Hydroelectric System, Plant 4  
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HAER No. CA-145-4-I (Page 6)



23'

9.5'

